IN THE CLAIMS:

The status of the claims is as noted below.

1.   (Original) An image synthesizing apparatus for synthesizing two images,

comprising:

coefficient setting means for setting a blending coefficient α ($0 \leqq \alpha \leqq 1$) at a

specified value when a value of a specific picture element component included in picture element

components A of a first image is a predetermined value; and

arithmetic means for performing an operation on said picture element components

A, picture element components B of a second image, and said blending coefficient α as follows:

$$A * \alpha + B * (1 - \alpha)$$

and performing said operation on all the picture element components A and the

picture element components B of a picture element that has the specific picture element

component representing the predetermined value by using said blending coefficient α set by said

coefficient setting means.

2.   (Currently Amended) An image synthesizing apparatus as claimed in claim 1,

wherein a value that is outside a specified range of values that can be assumed by

said specific picture element component and does not affect display of said first image is

recorded [in] <u>associated with</u> said specific picture element component as said predetermined

value for setting said blending coefficient α at said specified value in said operation.

3.   (Original) An image synthesizing apparatus as claimed in claim 1,

wherein specific picture element component is a luminance component.

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4.   (Original) An image synthesizing apparatus as claimed in claim 1,

wherein said coefficient setting means sets said blending coefficient α at zero

value specific picture element component is zero, and sets said blending coefficient α at unity

when said specific picture element component is other than zero.

5.   (Original) An image synthesizing apparatus as claimed in claim 1,

wherein said coefficient setting means sets said blending coefficient α at zero

when said specific picture element component is zero, and sets said blending coefficient α at a

specified value that satisfies $0 < \alpha \leq 1$ when said specific picture element component is other

than zero.

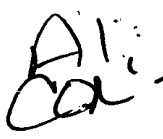6.   (Original) An image synthesizing apparatus as claimed in claim 1,

wherein data of said first image and data of said second image are data in an ITU-

R601 format having a luminance component and a color difference component as said picture

element components A and said picture element components B, respectively.

7.   (Original) An image synthesizing method for synthesizing two images.

wherein an operation is performed on picture element components A of a first

image, picture element components B of a second image, and a blending coefficient α $(0 \leq \alpha \leq 1)$

as follows:

$$A * \alpha + B * (1 - \alpha)$$

and when a specific picture element component included in said picture element

components A represents a predetermined value, said blending coefficient α is set at a specified

value in said operation on all the picture element components A and the picture element

components B of a picture element that has the specific picture element component representing

the predetermined value.